

# ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet



29 Hazen Drive, Concord, New Hampshire 03301 • (603) 271-3503 • [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov)

WMD-HW-24

2001

## What General Contractors Need To Know About Mercury

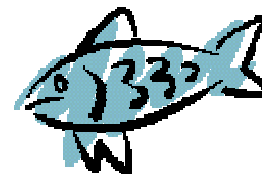
### Why Is Mercury An Issue?



Mercury is **highly toxic to humans and wildlife**. It accumulates in the tissues of fish and other organisms inhabiting mercury-contaminated waters and builds up in the tissues of organisms higher up the food chain, including humans. In humans, mercury is toxic to the nervous system, affecting the brain, spinal cord, kidneys and liver. Mercury exposure is particularly significant for young children and pregnant women because mercury inhibits the development of the brain and the nervous system. Lowered

intelligence, impaired hearing, and poor coordination are some of the effects seen in children with elevated mercury exposure.

Mercury also adversely affects wildlife. Eagles, osprey, common loons, river otters, mink, and other fishing-eating animals may suffer premature death, weight loss, difficulties reproducing, and other problems as a result of eating mercury-contaminated fish.

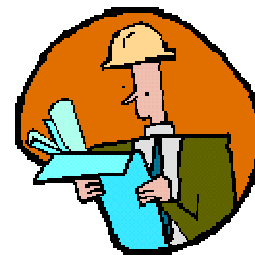


### Why Should Contractors Be Concerned?

Mercury can be found in items such as **thermostats, thermometers, tilt-switches, sump pump switches, relays, and fluorescent bulbs**. Contractors can come in contact with these items on a daily basis either during construction or during demolition. Most often, these mercury-containing devices are disposed of as solid waste, and mercury ends up in the environment either by incineration, or by leaching into the land and water.

### What Should Contractors Do?

Since mercury is a hazardous waste, demolition or renovation contractors are hazardous waste small-quantity generators and are subject to the *New Hampshire Hazardous Waste Rules*. These rules can be downloaded from [www.des.state.nh.us/hwrb/hwrules.pdf](http://www.des.state.nh.us/hwrb/hwrules.pdf) or obtained from the DES Public Information Center at (603) 271-2975.



Spent/replaced mercury-containing products must be managed as either **hazardous waste** or **universal waste**. If managed as a hazardous waste, the contractor must obtain an EPA ID number, manage hazardous waste properly prior to disposal, manifest all hazardous waste/mercury-containing devices and transport them through a certified hazardous waste hauler.

The Thermostat Recycling Center (TRC) collects thermostats for free, but there is a small fee to dispose of fluorescent lamps, tilt switches, etc. Please see the attached list of fluorescent lamp and ballast recycling facilities.

If managed as a universal waste, the contractor can recycle mercury-containing devices free of charge with a recycler. Universal wastes are exempt from the Hazardous Waste Rules, but must be stored properly to prevent release, labeled correctly, self-transported, or shipped with a bill of lading.

As a contractor, you should attempt to use **mercury-free alternatives** whenever feasible, in order to reduce mercury at its source. Avoiding the use of mercury-containing devices eliminates the problem before it develops. A list of mercury-free alternatives can be found as an attachment to this fact sheet. In addition, you should remove and recycle mercury products during demolition. Many HVAC and plumbing/heating suppliers now recycle old mercury thermostats and tilt switches. For a list of participating businesses, please call DES at (603) 271-2956.

### For More Information

A list of mercury-containing device recycling facilities, DES's [New Hampshire Mercury Reduction Strategy](#), copies of other [fact sheets](#), and the [New Hampshire Hazardous Waste Rules](#) are available from DES's Public Information and Permitting Office at 603-271-2975 (TDD Access: Relay NH 1-800-735-2964). Copies of DES fact sheets and rules are also available on DES's web site at [www.des.state.nh.us](http://www.des.state.nh.us).

### FLUORESCENT LAMP AND BALLAST RECYCLING FACILITIES

Advanced Environmental Recycling Co. 2591 Mitchell Avenue Allentown, PA 18103 (800) 554-AERC L&B	Light Cycle, Inc. 1222 University Avenue St. Paul, MN 55104 (612) 641-1309 L&B	Recyclights, Inc. 401 West 86th Street Bloomington, MN 55420-2707 (800) 831-2852 L&B
American Lamp Recycling 26 Industrial Way Wappingers Falls, NY 12590 (800) 516-6262 L&B	Mercury Refining Co., Inc 1218 Central Avenue Albany, NY 12205 (518) 459-0820 (800) 833-3505 L&B	Recyclights, Inc. 4220 Perimeter Drive Columbus, OH 43228 (800) 831-2852 L&B
Bethlehem Apparatus, Co. 890 Front Street PO Box Y Hellertown, PA 18055 (610) 838-7034 L	Mercury Technologies of Minnesota, Inc. PO Box 13 Pine City, MN 55063-0013 (800) 864-3821 L	Recyclights, Inc. 4960 Lakeland Commerce Parkway Lakeland, FL 33805 (800) 831-2852 L&B
Dynex Environmental, Inc. 4747 Mustang Circle St. Paul, MN 55112 (800) 733-9639 L&B	Mercury Waste Solutions 1002 West Troy Avenue Indianapolis, IN 46225 (317) 782-3228 L&B	Recyclights, Inc. 4972 Woodville Highway Tallahassee, FL 32311 (800) 831-2852 L&B
Global Recycling	Mercury Waste Solutions	Salesco Systems, USA, Inc.

Technologies, Inc. 218 Canton Street Stoughton, MA 02072 (781) 341-6080 <b>L&amp;B</b>	2007 West County Road C-2 Roseville, MN 55113 (612)628-9370 (800) 741-3343 <b>L&amp;B</b>	40 Messina Drive Braintree, MA 02184 (800) 368-8878 <b>L&amp;B</b>
Laidlaw Environmental 21750 Cedar Avenue Lakeville, MN 55044 (612) 469-3475 <b>L&amp;B</b>	Northeast Lamp Recycling, Inc. 250 Main Street East Windsor, CT 06088 (860) 292-1992 <b>L</b>	Superior Lamp Recycling PO Box 1323 Fond du Lac, WI 54936-1323 (800) 556-5367 <b>L</b>
Conservation Lighting Inc. 470 Riverside Street Portland ME 04103 (207) 878-5534 <b>L</b>	Environmental Enterprises Inc. 10163 Cincinnati-Dayton Road Cincinnati OH 45241-1005 (513) 772-2818 (800) 722-2818 <b>L</b>	

This is not a complete list of all recycling facilities available, nor does it imply endorsement from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. Note: L = Lamps Recycling and B = Ballast Recycling.